

Janice Brady

**From:** Diane Oldenburg [DOldenburg@lewistown.k12.mt.us]  
**Sent:** Thursday, January 13, 2011 5:37 PM  
**To:** Janice Brady  
**Subject:** Graduates Testimony Ltr for Legislature  
**Importance:** High

TESTIMONY FOR THE MONTANA LEGISLATURE

**From:** Annette Fjeldheim  
**Sent:** Thursday, January 13, 2011 2:34 PM  
**To:** Diane Oldenburg  
**Subject:** MSU-Northern

To Whom it May Concern:

I am pleased to have this chance to express my appreciation for the opportunity provided to me by having the MSU-Northern campus available in Lewistown. I was a single mother with three children still at home when I moved back to Lewistown to be closer to my family for support. Like most people in my position, it was necessary that I work two jobs to provide for my family and it was a bit of a struggle. When my youngest child entered college I explored the possibilities for personal growth available to me. As a non-traditional student my needs were far different from those of young high school graduates heading off to college. It was necessary that I continue to work and be available to provide support and a home base for my children. I had worked hard to become established in my jobs and I also wanted to be available to assist my aging parents if necessary. Moving to a new community was not considered an option.

I discovered that I was in a position to complete my education in a rewarding marketable field right here at home through the Lewistown campus of MSU-Northern. I knew that I would be 51 years old when I graduated from college and entered a new career. I was also keenly aware that if I did not change my path I would not only be stuck in jobs I did not enjoy, I would have a difficult time financially for the rest of my life. I was excited about the opportunity to improve my situation. The struggle was worth it. I am now employed full-time as an RN with Billings Clinic Hospital in the Resource Pool. My work is exciting, challenging, and rewarding. Instead of working two low-paying jobs, I now make four times the income I used to make working three nights a week as an RN. I travel to Billings and stay in an apartment while I work but I still make my home in Lewistown. I am able to work in a nationally recognized regional medical facility, enjoy the learning opportunities that are provided in that setting, and still bring my paycheck back to my small community. I will be forever grateful for that opportunity and hope it will continue to be provided for others. Having this opportunity available not only assists individuals in personal growth, it enables them to re-invest themselves and their resources back into their communities.

Thank you for this opportunity to express my gratitude.

Sincerely, Annette Fjeldheim, R.N., Graduate of MSUN-Lewistown

Good Morning,

My name is Anna Merchen and I am from Helena. This is my 8<sup>th</sup> year in 4-H and I can't talk enough about how 4-H has positively affected my life. 4-H has provided me with programs and activities that have enabled me to make informed decisions on what I want to do with not only my future career but also the many other aspects of my life. Hard work, responsibility and patience are very important when raising livestock, and as the years have flown by during my 4-H career, I have realized that the hands-on projects allowed me to transfer qualities such as these to my schooling, work and everything else. I have also gained leadership and public speaking skills that have allowed me to become a confident young adult. These qualities have all been developed and polished through the 4-H programs that MSU Extension funds. I feel very confident about my future and I owe this to the 4-H program. 4-H has been one of the best and most important extra-curricular activities of my life, along with many other youth across the state. Please consider the many benefits of 4-H, funded through MSU Extension, while making budget cuts. Thank you very much for your time and your previous support of 4-H.

Justina Bomgardner, Loma MT

MSU-Extensions 4-H program has given me the opportunity to enhance my leadership abilities, push me to do things I did not think I could do, and move me to make future choices in my career.

Planning a fundraiser for my county's Emergency Medical Services, is just one of many things I have done through the 4-H program and MSU-Extension.

My Extension agent is involved with both 4-H and Emergency Medical Services. She was a remarkable resource for the fundraiser. And has made a great influence on my career plans

Emergency Medical service is now part of my future education plan, I was able to develop a passion for EMS through MSU- Extension and the 4-H Ambassador Program.

Good Morning

I am Ann Bitz from Big Sandy. Your support of MSU Extension who administers the 4-H program affects thousands of youth's lives every year. Having been a 10 year member, a 12 year club leader, and now a state advisor, I can look back and see how the program has provided opportunities for me to become the best I can be. As an adult volunteer involved in the program I think the most exciting part about being involved in 4-H is watching the youth go from shy, unsure children into confident youth.

Knowledge developed in 4-H, whether it be research based knowledge coming from MSU Extension or decision making, leadership & public speaking skills practiced at the club level, serve them their entire lives. All youth, especially youth at risk, have opportunities to succeed in 4-H because it provides a safe, supportive, inclusive environment where healthy relationships develop between youth and adults.

Members have the opportunity to explore different careers they might be interested in with hands on training in the 4-H program. Please fund MSU Extension adequately so no programs will need to be cut.

250 D and B Lane  
Big Sandy, MT 59520  
January 16, 2011

Dear Budget Committee Members,

I would like to share with you why adequate funding for the Montana Extension Service is so very important. The MSU Extension Service played and still plays a key role in the decisions I make and activities I participate in. My involvement with the Extension Service began when I enrolled as a 4-H member. I was a 10 year 4-H member, served as a leader for 12 years, and am currently serving as one of the 2 State Advisors. My early involvement in 4-H helped me develop public speaking skills and demonstration skills that took me to the campus of Montana State University for the State 4-H Congress. My familiarity with the campus at MSU and the variety of work of the Extension Agent lead me to attend MSU where I earned my Bachelor of Science degree in Home Economics Extension/Education. I had been considering attending an out of state school, but because I felt at home at MSU, I chose to attend there.

It is hard to express everything that the Extension Service has done for me through the 4-H program. The knowledge, life-time learning mind-set, and application of acquired skills and knowledge from 4-H projects that were impressed upon me 40 years ago are still being used today. Public speaking in 4-H helped me become comfortable in front of groups – in fact, it is something I still enjoy today. I think that is partly what made me choose the career of Extension/Education. My speech classes in high school and college were a breeze thanks to the background in public speaking that 4-H provided me. I am not concerned if someone asks me to “say a few words” at the last minute because I know I have the skills. The leadership skills and techniques I developed in 4-H took me around the nation as a National Officer in the Future Homemakers of America. Those skills have served me in my adult life as I sat on various boards in different officer positions during my teaching career. I currently serve on our church board because of those skills acquired through the 4-H program. I also believe it is through the confidence I developed through the 4-H program, that I am not afraid to speak my mind and be active in our community. 4-H was a place where I (the not so popular, non-athlete) could succeed and feel good about what I did. Volunteering was another aspect of the program that I still participate in today.

In my years of being a 4-H leader, I have seen the program take shy, low self-esteem children and develop them into well spoken, confident youth who will take on projects that most adults would shy away from. Recently, our county's Junior Ambassador planned a recognition dinner for all the Emergency Service Personnel in Chouteau County. She booked the place, recruited people to decorate and help serve the meal, booked a guest speaker and caterer, solicited silent auction item, purchased supplies, and did all the planning by herself. We had another Ambassador do all the leg work to begin a paintball program in our county. He researched the requirements, solicited sponsors (12 sponsors at \$160), wrote up the rules & regulations, and implemented the program. These are just two examples from thousands of community minded service projects 4-H members do in their communities all the time. All youth, especially youth at risk, have opportunities to succeed in 4-H because it provides a safe, supportive, inclusive environment where healthy relationships develop between youth and adults. Members develop life skills of decision making and leadership skills that serve them their entire lives. They have the opportunity to explore different careers they might be interested in with hands on training in the 4-H program. The organization also provides its members with the opportunity for mastery, self-determination, and seeing oneself as an active participant in the future.

The Extension Service is a valuable part of Montana's heritage. It is through the transmission of research knowledge to the common citizen that we have the level of performance we do. Montana is still an agricultural based economy. If we want our young people to stay here and work, we can't stop providing valuable information to them.

Please consider your budget recommendations to provide more support to the program that helps youth acquire life skills necessary to meet the challenges of growing up and keeps agriculture number one in Montana.

Sincerely,

Ann K. Bitz  
2008-2012 State 4-H Officer Team Advisor

January 18, 2011

To Whom It May Concern,

I am very sorry that I cannot be with you today. My name is Cheyann Calendrillo and I am 17 years old. I am from Livingston, Mt and have been involved in the 4-H program for 11 years. I cannot even begin to impress upon you all that I have learned through 4-H. I started when I was seven years old. I was a shy, introvert little girl. I wouldn't talk to anyone or leave the side of my mother. Now, 11 years later, I am an outgoing, talkative young lady and a State Ambassador Officer. All of this happened because of 4-H. 4-H has taught me leadership, public speaking, determination, reliability, record keeping – the list goes on. Without 4-H, I would still be that shy little girl I was ten years ago.

4-H has also helped me to establish my own business. I took my very first market hog to fair six years ago. Because I loved it so much, I started the swine breeding project. I was able to turn this project into my own swine breeding business, called "Fine Swine." I now have 11 pigs which I breed each year and sell the weaner pigs to 4-H members across the state. Through 4-H, I have learned how to manage and operate a small business, handle funds, and have a stable clientele.

4-H also offers many scholarships that help the senior members to attend college. I know that without the many scholarships 4-H has to offer, I would not be able to attend college and reach my goal of getting a degree in Molecular Chemistry. This is just another of the endless benefits of 4-H.

Without the generous funding MSU-Extension receives from donors like you, 4-H would not be possible. And without 4-H, I, along with thousands of youth across the state and country, would not have such an amazing opportunity to become the best that we can be.

Thank you for your time,

Cheyann Calendrillo  
3 Pony Lane  
Livingston, MT 59047  
(406)-222-4957

To Whom It May Concern,

I am writing this letter on behalf of the many youth who participate in the 4-H program. I am a parent of two children involved in 4-H for the past 10 years and also a leader of various projects. I have had the pleasure of watching many young, unsure, children grow into self confident, outspoken young adults because of the life building skills they learned through the 4-H program. As for my own two children, I cannot even begin to tell you what the 4-H program has done for them. Through their projects they have learned exceptional record keeping skills, speaking skills, leadership, and how to be reliable, conscientious, outstanding citizens. They have learned how valuable your community can be to you and the importance of giving back to your community through community services, and by being positive roll models to the younger members of our community.

I am well aware that budget cuts are happening in all businesses and organizations throughout our country. My concerns about budget cuts within the 4-H program are how it is going to directly affect the children. I have seen in past years where cutbacks in spending end up costing the kids more than anyone. The members in the 4-H program put in a lot of time and the families have a lot of out of pocket expenses to keep these children involved in the projects. In past years the MSU extension budget cuts end up getting passed down to the families in 4-H.

If cut backs in spending are absolutely necessary for keeping this wonderful youth organization going then please make sure those cutbacks do not directly affect the kids.

May I suggest taking a closer look at how the money of extension agents, faculty etc. are spending money. I believe upon close examination there are quite a few areas that could cut back some spending. Put it all together and we would have some substantial savings.

What is needed is a reliable, unbiased person to keep track of the spending of MSU extension agents and faculty. How many MSU extensions stayed at the Red Lion (\$79.95) vs. staying at Super 8 (\$58.88)? This is just a small example of one area to cut expenses.

With 4-H being the outstanding youth organization that it is and seeing the life building skills in instills in many of our youth, I hate to see any budget cuts at all. If cuts in spending money are the only way to keep the 4-H alive and going then please, monitor the cuts in spending so it does not directly hurt the youth. Thank you for taking the time to read my letter.

Sincerely Yours,

Lori Calendrillo  
3 Pony Lane  
Livingston, Montana 59047  
406-222-4957